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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

GENERAL BOOKS AND BOOKS OF ANCIENT HISTORY

Persia Past and Present. A Book of Travel and Research with more than two hundred illustrations and a map. By A. V. WILLIAMS JACKSON, Professor of Indo-Iranian Languages, and sometime Adjunct Professor of the English Language and Literature in Columbia University. (New York: The Macmillan Company; London: Macmillan and Company. 1906. Pp. xxxi, 471.)

THE book is the outcome of a journey made by Professor Jackson in 1903 through Persia. Its plan naturally follows the course of his itinerary, which may be indicated in summarizing briefly the contents of the work. The opening portion (pp. 1-32) carries the reader from New York via Moscow, Baku, Tiflis, and Erivan to the Persian frontier at Julfa, and concludes with a chapter on the land, its history, and our interest in the country, the last section dealing with the influences that Persian art, architecture, literature, and religion have exerted upon the world, and with the indebtedness of the English language to the Persian. In the next section (pp. 33-174) is the account of the journey from Julfa to Tabriz, thence around Lake Urumiah (the Chaechasta of the Avesta) to Urumiah and on past Takht-i Suleiman to Hamadan, the two rival claimants to the site of Ecbatana. As Urumiah is supposed to be the scene of the early labors of Zoroaster, the interest in the great prophet of Iran naturally comes to the front and gives occasion for a chapter (only too brief) on Zoroaster and the Avesta. At Hamadan begin the cuneiform inscriptions with the Ganj Namah inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes, and during the next section of the journey (pp. 175-320) this subject is in the foreground. A special chapter is devoted to the inscriptions and the ever interesting story of their decipherment, and we have besides the account of the dangerous climb up the Behistan rock, and of the visits to Murghab (Pasargadae), the tombs of Naksh-i Rostam, and the ruined palaces of Persepolis. Interwoven with this is the description of the Sasanian sculptures of Tak-i Bostan, Kermanshah, and Naksh-i Rostam. Zoroastrianism receives its share in the accounts of the temple of Anahita at Kangavar, and the ruined fire-temple near Isfahan, while the modern aspects of that city are not overlooked. In the remainder of the book (pp. 321-446) the interest centres successively around Shiraz, the home of Hafiz and

Saadi; Yezd, the present stronghold of Zoroastrianism in Persia; and Teheran, the modern capital, with its suburb Rei identified with Raghā. From Teheran the author proceeded to the shore of the Caspian, where he took a steamer at Resht for Baku. His journey thence through Turkestan to Samarkand is to form the subject of another work.

As the subtitle indicates, the book is intended for two classes of readers—the specialist and the man of general cultivation; and the first point that claims recognition is the skill with which these partly diverse interests have been prevented from coming into conflict. For the general reader the work possesses all the elements that go to make books of travel in strange lands interesting reading. It is a story of danger and hardship encountered with courage, and overcome by patience, endurance, and perseverance in the pursuit of an important end—a story told with the utmost modesty, and enlivened with flashes of a humor that must have helped the author in many a situation. Politics and the details of trade relations do not enter into the plan of the book, but thanks to the keenness of Professor Jackson's observations and his unusual power of expressing them in language, the book presents a most vivid picture of the life in Persia both of the traveller and of the people by whom he was surrounded, of the present aspects of the country, and of the monuments of its past greatness. The unusual merit that constitutes the superiority of the book is that the reader is made to see all this through the eyes of one who has studied deeply Persia's history, literature, and religion, and he thus receives the benefits of a truer perspective and a far richer association of ideas than could be given by the description of what any ordinary traveller had seen. In this connection attention may be directed especially to the chapters headed, "Persia, the Land and its History, and our Interest in the Country", "Zoroaster and the Avesta", and "The Rock Inscriptions of the Great Persian Kings", which are models of the popular exposition of the results of scientific study. Another charm of the book is due to the author's love of nature and of literature, both well exemplified in the chapter on "Shiraz, the Home of the Persian Poets." In his enjoyment of the book the general reader may go from cover to cover without inconvenience from the scholarly work, which chiefly settles like a rich sediment in the foot-notes. In these moreover an awakened interest will find a guide to further information. The author fears that the general reader may check at some dozen of pages of discussion of the new readings of the Behistan inscription, but to the reviewer it seems that one would be unwilling to miss this insight into the nature of the main motive to which he is indebted for the production of such an attractive book.

For the scholar the book is valuable both for the richness of its bibliographical references and for its own contributions to the subject. Among these the work at Behistan would alone constitute a memorable achievement. A quotation from Rawlinson will indicate the difficulty and importance of the task: "I will not say much as to the danger

or difficulty of ascending the rock and reaching the upper part of the sculptures which are some 500 feet above the plain. I did not think much at the time of the risk to life and limb, but it must be remembered that Messrs. Coste and Flandin having been deputed to the spot with express instructions to copy the inscription returned *re infecta* declaring the sculptures to be absolutely inaccessible; and I may further add that although there is still something to be copied and much to be verified I have never heard but of one traveller accomplishing the ascent since the period of my last visit." The work of this traveller seems to have amounted to nil, and so after the lapse of more than half a century there remains for Professor Jackson the glory of being the first to give the world a verification of Rawlinson's great work. Three facts stand out clearly from his examination of the inscription: (1) the general accuracy of Rawlinson's work; (2) that there is still information to be gleaned, but to the fullest extent only by one abreast with the work in the subject (the author left the rock convinced that Foy's emendation of Bh. 4. 64: *ārštām* is the actual reading, while it is clear from his account that the most careful observer who was ignorant of this emendation would read with Rawlinson *abaštām*); (3) that this work should be done immediately on account of the disintegration of the rock. It must be a cause of deep regret that time did not permit Professor Jackson to verify the reading of the whole of the Old Persian text, especially as it might reasonably be hoped that the gleanings would prove richest in its least accessible parts.

Next in importance are the descriptions of present beliefs and practices: the detailed account of the Zoroastrian communities at Yezd (pp. 353-400) and Teheran (pp. 425-427, *cf.* also 119, 217, 273, 336-338, 403-404, 406, 413, 438, 440); the account of the Yezidis or devil-worshippers of Tiflis (pp. 10 *et seqq.*); and such legends as the version of the apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy (p. 102) and of Alexander at Hamadan (p. 164). For the archaeologist there is the discussion of the identifications of various sites, especially important being the discussion with regard to Ecbatana; the accounts of diggings in the ash-heaps near Urumiah; the description of the temple of Anahita at Kangavar and of the fire-temple near Isfahan. Besides there are the descriptions of the various monuments, which are sometimes fuller than previous accounts (*e. g.*, p. 210); sometimes correct previous ideas (p. 282, n. 2); and are always valuable on account of their clearness. Finally there are numerous indications (pp. 163, 173, 242, 250, 407, 433) of places where excavations might be made with profit.

Two services of a broader nature to the cause of scholarship must at least be indicated: (1) the value to students of the early monuments of having their attention drawn to the modern conditions of the land; (2) the securing for Iranian studies a broader basis of that popular interest without which no branch of science can long thrive. The services rendered in this line to comparative philology by Max Mueller

are universally recognized, and the present work is admirably adapted to confer similar benefits upon Iranian studies.

The only criticism of the book to be offered here is on the positiveness of the attribution of the monuments at Murghab to Cyrus the Great. Weissbach's ascription of the inscription and relief to the younger Cyrus and his denial of the identity of the tomb with that described by the classic writers are entitled to mention, even if one does not (like the reviewer) believe them the more probable explanations.

In conclusion unlimited praise must be given to the make-up of the book, to the liberality of the index, and the execution of the map and illustrations, many of which are from unpublished photographs taken by the author or his friends.

GEORGE MELVILLE BOLLING.

Homer and His Age. By ANDREW LANG. (London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1906. Pp. xii, 336.)

THE sturdy champion of Homeric unity has here given the Disintegrationists such a shaking up as they have rarely had before. And for all true believers what a consolation! Against the critics who regard the *Iliad* as the work of four or five centuries and so a medley of old and new, of obsolete and modern, Mr. Lang maintains that it is "the work of a single age, a single stage of culture, the poet describing his own environment." It is an age which has substituted cremation for burial of the dead; which retains bronze for arms while employing iron for tools; which keeps the huge Mycenaean shield now strengthened by bronze plates and has elaborated corselets and greaves. This age, he thinks, is certainly sundered from the Mycenaean prime by the century or two in which changing ideas led to the superseding of burial by burning; or by a foreign conquest and the years in which the foreign conquerors acquired the language of their subjects.

To begin with, Mr. Lang finds abundant *raison d'être* for the long epic in a society like that drawn in the *Odyssey*. There the minstrel "has an opportunity that never occurred again till the literary age of Greece for producing a long poem continued from night to night." True enough: does not Odysseus himself reel off a sixth of the *Odyssey* during one night in hall? Think, too, of poor Penelope's unbidden house-party three years running, with leisure for a dozen *Iliads* and *Odysseys* if Phemius had had a mind to sing them!

And to end with, our author makes as short work of the difficulty of handing down these long poems. They were preserved and transmitted, he declares, not by gilds of rhapsodists but by early written texts. It is interesting to recall how, years before Evans had dreamed of digging at Knossos, Lang had written in his Letter to Homer: "May we discover thee practising a new art and strange, graving Phœnician symbols on tablets of wood, or writing with a reed pen on slips of papyrus?" And now we actually find at Knossos not only thousands of inscribed clay tablets, but earthen cups of Early Minoan time bear-